

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation -- allowing one entity to express its OPINION in a broad public forum without any apparent requirement to offer "equal time" to an opposing view.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest in a fair and balanced manner. But when they and other large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for their political position and bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of programming produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive and balanced news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. The FCC has a responsibility to see to it that the media companies using the free airwaves do so in a thoughtful, fair, and balanced way, not simply for their political and financial gain. Thank you.